

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirty-first day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:04 a.m., February 4, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on February 5. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

February 1, 2003

Good morning. Earlier this week, I reported to the American people on the state of our Union. I asked Congress to join me in meeting the great challenges that confront our Nation with the courage and resolve our times require.

Working together, we'll strengthen our economy and lay the foundation for sustained growth so that every person who wants to work can find a job. We will modernize Medicare to make sure that seniors can choose the coverage that fits them best, including coverage for prescription drugs. We will reform America's medical liability system to cut down on excessive lawsuits that are driving up the cost of health care. We will make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy by speeding up development of pollution-free cars that run on hydrogen. We will renew the hope of welfare reform and support the faith-based and community groups who bring hope and healing to children who need mentors and men and women who struggle with drug addiction.

The qualities of courage and compassion that we strive for in America also determine our conduct abroad. Across the world, we are meeting the threat of terrorism to make the world safer and confronting the grave dangers posed by outlaw regimes. At the same time, America can also make this world better by bringing the merciful powers of modern medicine to people in great need.

Today in Africa, nearly 30 million people have the AIDS virus, including 3 million children under the age of 15. To meet this growing crisis, I am proposing the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. This comprehensive plan will prevent 7 million new AIDS infections, treat at least 2 million people with life-extending drugs, and provide humane care for millions of people suffering from AIDS and for children orphaned by AIDS. Facilities across Africa will have the medicine to treat AIDS because it will be purchased with funds provided by the United States.

I'm asking the Congress to commit \$15 billion to fight AIDS overseas for the next 5 years, beginning with \$2 billion in 2004. This plan, coupled with our ongoing efforts, will nearly triple our current annual spending on the global fight against AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.

Our efforts to combat AIDS in Africa are made more difficult by severe food shortage sweeping that continent, a crisis that affects up to 30 million people in southern Africa and the Horn of Africa, particularly Ethiopia. Hunger, sickness, and grief have left people across the continent even more vulnerable to the effects of AIDS.

Across the Earth, America is feeding the hungry. More than 60 percent of international emergency food aid comes as a gift from the people of the United States. Building on this commitment, my budget for 2004 calls for more than \$1 billion to meet emergency food needs worldwide. Today I announced a new proposal for a \$200 million famine fund to bring immediate assistance to Africa and other regions facing starvation. Money from the fund will be available to purchase food supplies directly or to support farmers in food production. We will encourage friends around the world to set up similar funds and leverage our combined resources to provide the most help to famine-stricken lands.

Through all our efforts to fight disease and hunger, we can spare people in many nations from untold suffering, and Africa especially. Millions are facing great affliction, but with our help, they will not face it alone. America has a special calling to come to their aid, and

we will do so with the compassion and generosity that have always defined the United States.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:43 a.m. on January 31 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 31 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Address to the Nation on the Loss of Space Shuttle *Columbia*

February 1, 2003

My fellow Americans, this day has brought terrible news and great sadness to our country. At 9 o'clock this morning, Mission Control in Houston lost contact with our Space Shuttle *Columbia*. A short time later, debris was seen falling from the skies above Texas. The *Columbia* is lost. There are no survivors.

On board was a crew of seven: Col. Rick Husband; Lt. Col. Michael Anderson; Comdr. Laurel Clark; Capt. David Brown; Comdr. William McCool; Dr. Kalpana Chawla; and Ilan Ramon, a colonel in the Israeli Air Force. These men and women assumed great risk in the service to all humanity.

In an age when space flight has come to seem almost routine, it is easy to overlook the dangers of travel by rocket and the difficulties of navigating the fierce outer atmosphere of the Earth. These astronauts knew the dangers, and they faced them willingly, knowing they had a high and noble purpose in life. Because of their courage and daring and idealism, we will miss them all the more.

All Americans today are thinking as well of the families of these men and women who have been given this sudden shock and grief. You're not alone. Our entire Nation grieves with you. And those you loved will always have the respect and gratitude of this country.

The cause in which they died will continue. Mankind is led into the darkness beyond our world by the inspiration of dis-

covery and the longing to understand. Our journey into space will go on.

In the skies today we saw destruction and tragedy. Yet farther than we can see, there is comfort and hope. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Lift your eyes and look to the heavens. Who created all these? He who brings out the starry hosts one by one and calls them each by name. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing."

The same Creator who names the stars also knows the names of the seven souls we mourn today. The crew of the shuttle *Columbia* did not return safely to Earth. Yet we can pray that all are safely home.

May God bless the grieving families, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Proclamation 7646—Honoring the Memory of the Astronauts Aboard Space Shuttle *Columbia*

February 1, 2003

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As a mark of respect for Rick Douglas Husband, William C. McCool, Laurel Blair Salton Clark, Kalpana Chawla, Michael P. Anderson, David M. Brown, and Ilan Ramon who gave their lives during the mission of STS-107 aboard the Space Shuttle *Columbia* on February 1, 2003, I hereby order, by the authority vested in me as President of the United States of America by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff at the White House and upon all public buildings and grounds, at all military posts and naval stations, and on all naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions through Wednesday, February 5, 2003. I also direct that the flag shall be flown at half-staff for the same length of time at all